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Hyporchematic Footprints in Euripides' *Electra*

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This chapter explores the tragic path of one of the most elusive and least understood choral lyric genres: the *hyporchēma*.¹ Despite the fact that the hyporcheme is included in prominent accounts of ancient lyric music and dance as early as the fifth century,² testimonies regarding both the basic nature and specific characteristics of these 'dancing songs' are scarce and often contradictory. The few surviving ancient sources frequently disagree with one another regarding the basics of the *hyporchēma*, including its place of origin and distinguishing features, though they emphasise its ubiquity and importance. To add to this complication, until recently the term was liberally applied by modern scholars to certain tragic choral odes perceived as especially lively or vigorous, particularly those found in Sophocles expressing sudden joy and which stand in marked contrast to the disaster that immediately follows. Recent insights into the nature of tragic *stasima* as well as into the practice of choral self-referentiality and projection, however, have led most scholars to banish the previously ubiquitous concept from discussions of tragedy, with the result that the term is now synonymous with misconception and is subsequently rarely mentioned in the most recent commentaries of plays featuring passages previously labelled as *hyporchēmata*.³

Both the difficulty of the evidence of the genre and the many uncertainties surrounding choral dancing in tragedy might suggest that any attempt wishing to account for hyporcheme as a lyric genre, and particularly for the manner in which tragedians might have evoked it in their plays, is futile. However, this chapter suggests that the term may still have some use in discussions of the tragic chorus' dancing, and in particular might help us better understand a brief strophic song by the chorus of women in Euripides' *Electra* (860-879) containing a unique performative dynamic between heroine and chorus. This ode, in which the women celebrate Orestes' murder of Aegisthus, has been previously examined in relation to non-dramatic choral lyric: recent work has analysed its many epinician evocations,⁴ and, until the mid-twentieth century, scholars formerly listed it among examples of tragic *hyporchēmata* simply because of its overt references to dancing.⁵ Still left unremarked is the fact that this ode is not only quite emphatic in its repeated indications of the physical movement of the tragic chorus, but it is also exceptional in its invitation to — *and* response by — Electra to sing a song that will accompany the chorus' celebratory dance.

In this chapter, I suggest that Euripides potentially flirts with one conception of the hyporcheme involving a separation between singers and dancers as he introduces the notion of two distinct movements performed by the chorus and Electra which occur at the same time. This brief choral ode remarkably documents a unique process of separation in which both parties refuse to join the other in their activity. My reading depends on a critical review of the surviving evidence of the *hyporchēma* and its more recent (mis)applications to tragedy;

¹ I am grateful to Lyndsay Coe, Lucy Jackson, and my co-editors Thomas Coward and Theodora Hadjimichael for reading and commenting on an earlier version of this chapter.

² Pl. *Ion* 534c includes the hyporcheme in a list of different types of established lyric compositions. See my discussion of the surviving evidence on the genre below.

³ E.g. Finglass' recent commentary on Sophocles' *Ajax* (2011), though admirably comprehensive in its learnedness, breadth and range, does not mention the word anywhere, not even in his discussion (p. 341) of the second *stasimon* (693-718), which in earlier scholarship tended to be cited as a prime example of a tragic hyporcheme. It is worth noting that in scholarship outside the Anglophone world, the term is still employed, e.g. Rodighiero 2012 (esp. pp. 19-60, in which he analyzes precisely the second *stasimon* of the *Ajax*).

⁴ Swift 2010, 156-170; Carey 2012: 22-25.

⁵ Denniston 1939, 154.

the first section of this chapter therefore re-evaluates the ancient testimonies which discuss the term to salvage a plausible sketch of the *hyporchēma*, whereas the second re-examines the genre's obscure footprints in tragedy. These two sections touch on important points regarding the study of choral lyric genres and their perceived presence in tragedy, such as the vague and inconsistent manner in which the Alexandrians and their followers classified terms like *hyporchēma*,⁶ and the pitfalls caused by the uncritical application of such terms by modern scholars. Nevertheless my main aim in resuscitating this poorly understood concept is to discuss the performance and representation of the chorus' dance in tragedy, a subject which is frequently neglected in accounts of *mousikē*, even though dance was one of its key components along with song and poetry. Though the nature of ancient Greek dance is incredibly difficult to capture based on the lack of surviving evidence, I argue that understanding the dynamics of this brief ode from Euripides' *Electra* in light of a potential hyporchematic imprint allows us to reconsider the various performative and orchestric modes that were possible on the tragic stage. While it may be impossible to reconstruct the details of any particular ancient choral movement or bodily gesture, an analysis of the ode's unique presentation of a strategic disjunction between singing and dancing may allow a glimpse into the self-reflexive way in which tragedians may have alluded to the *hyporchēma* and to the performance of tragic dance more generally.

EVIDENCE OF AN ELUSIVE GENRE

The *hyporchēma* may be the most baffling ancient lyric genre for us moderns to understand: though it is discussed by the foremost sources on ancient musical culture such as Athenaeus and Plutarch (and Pindar was said to have written two books of hyporchemes, and Bacchylides another), a persuasive account of its nature has been nearly impossible to produce. The extant fragments of Pindar's *hyporchēmata* have mostly survived as quotations from later sources, and taken together barely add up to fifty verses covering a range of unremarkable topics, from praise of Hieron (fr. 105ab) to stories of Hercules (fr. 111).⁷ The diachronic nature of the testimonies is especially problematic, since they were all separated by at least one or many removes from the classical period, rendering it impossible to reconstruct the assumptions and misconceptions regarding Athenian song culture and choral lyric genres under which each source operated. If all sources are to be believed equally, conflicting conceptions of the genre emerge: either the hyporcheme is a song sung to, or by, a group dancing uniformly in simultaneous dance and song, or the *hyporchēma* was a choral dance whose performance separated singers from a chorus of dancers; either the dance itself was mimetic, or an entirely frivolous affair. Essentially we have a genre which to some extent involved song and dance, much like *any other* choral lyric from antiquity. Accounts regarding its origin, place and mode of practice do not shed any further light and in fact frequently disagree with one another: some report that the hyporcheme may have originated in Crete like the *nomos* or the paean potentially in connection with the weapon dances of the Curetes, some claim that it had special prominence in Sparta, while others note that the *hyporchēma* was associated in particular with ceremonies for Apollo.⁸ Given that

⁶ Cf. Carey 2009.

⁷ Cf. Suda s.v. Πινδαρος, Stob. 3.11.19, Athen. 14.631c. There are even fewer for Bacchylides, the longest comprising five verses (fr. 14). Only one of the Pindaric fragments (fr. 107ab) contains a reference to rapid dancing; see Carey 2009, 25 n. 20.

⁸ According to the scholiast to Pindar, *Pyth.* 2.127 and Ps.-Plu. *Mus.* 1134b, Thaletas of Gortyn (7th century BC) was the inventor of the form. The scholiast to Pindar furthermore connects it to the Curetes and to Pyrrhichus the Cretan; cf. Ath. 5.10.19, which states: Κρητικὰ καλοῦσι τὰ ὑπορχήματα. However, the survey of music in

performance function is of central importance for understanding Greek genres, these contradictions coupled with the lack of any surviving ancient musical or orchestric schemes translate into modern uncertainty.

It is nevertheless possible to differentiate among the sources in order to produce a coherent conception of the genre. In one of the last comprehensive reviews of this elusive form, Massimo Di Marco highlights three sources in particular which contain the key to understanding *hyporchēmata* as well as the reasons why the original characteristics of the genre might have become distorted with time: Plutarch, Athenaeus, and Lucian.⁹ These three offer much fuller accounts of the genre than other sources, such as Photius' *Bibliotheca* (essentially a summary of Proclus' *Chrestomathia*), which merely include the hyporcheme in a list of important lyric genres. Quoting Proclus, Photius divides melic poetry according to religious, secular and mixed categories (that is, types assigned to the gods, others to men, and others to gods and men), and assigns the *hyporchēma* to the type allotted to the gods along with hymns, paeans, and the dithyramb.¹⁰ Plato's *Ion* 534c is a similar source: the hyporcheme is included in a list of other established genres such as dithyramb and iambos as examples of types of song specialties that each poet can compose through divine dispensation.¹¹ What these sources make clear is that in antiquity the *hyporchēma* already existed as a technical term that designated a particular species of melic song.¹²

In contrast, the accounts in Plutarch, Athenaeus and Lucian give some indication as to the nature of the *hyporchēma*: essentially, the hyporcheme is a choral melos that combines dancing and poetry into a unique song that is characterized by mimetic action. In Book IX of the *Quaestiones convivales* Plutarch tells of how the *hyporchēma* unites both dancing and poetry in order to create a single work that consists of an imitation through forms and words:

ὀρχηστικῇ δὲ καὶ ποιητικῇ κοινωνία πᾶσα καὶ μέθεξις ἀλλήλων ἐστί, καὶ μάλιστα [μιμούμεναι] περὶ <τὸ> τῶν ὑπορχημάτων γένος ἐν ἔργον ἀμφοτέραι τὴν διὰ τῶν σχημάτων καὶ τῶν ὀνομάτων μίμησιν ἀποτελοῦσι.

(Plutarch, *Quaest. conv.* IX.748a-b)

Dancing and poetry share much in common and are in partnership with one another, especially when they are mixed together in the type of composition known as *hyporchēmata*, in which they both produce a single work, an imitation through poses and words.¹³

According to Plutarch, the genre contains a crucial defining mimetic component, and it is precisely this lively mimetic and scenic representation of the words that links poetry and

Ps.-Plu. *Mus.* 1134c-d also connects it to Sparta, whereas Luc. *Salt.* 16 associates it with performances for Apollo. See also Robbins 1998, 815.

⁹ Di Marco 1973-1974.

¹⁰ Photius, *Bibl.* 319b-320a: Περὶ δὲ μελικῆς ποιήσεως φησιν ὡς πολυμερεστάτη τε καὶ διαφορὸν ἔχει τομάς. Ἄ μὲν γὰρ αὐτῆς μεμέρισται θεοῖς, ἃ δὲ <ἀνθρώποις, ἃ δὲ θεοῖς καὶ> ἀνθρώποις, ἃ δὲ εἰς τὰς προσπιπτούσας περιστάσεις. Καὶ εἰς θεοὺς μὲν ἀναφέρεσθαι ὕμνον, προσόδιον, παιᾶνα, διθύραμβον, νόμον, ἀδωνίδα, ἰόβακχον, ὑπορχήματα ('Regarding melic poetry, he [Proclus] says that it has a great many parts and different divisions. Some types are assigned to the gods, others to men, others to gods and men, and still another group to various circumstances. The ones that refer to the gods are the hymn, the prosodion, the paeon, the dithyramb, the nomos, adonidia, the iobakhon, and hyporchēmata.')

¹¹ Pl. *Ion* 534c: ἀλλὰ θεῖα μοῖρα, τοῦτο μόνον οἷός τε ἕκαστος ποιεῖν καλῶς ἐφ' ὃ ἡ Μοῦσα αὐτὸν ὥρμησεν, ὃ μὲν διθύραμβος, ὃ δὲ ἐγκώμια, ὃ δὲ ὑπορχήματα, ὃ δ' ἔπη, ὃ δ' ἰάμβους· ('But it is by a divine dispensation that each one is able to compose successfully that to which the Muse has stirred him: this man dithyrambs, another encomia, another hyporchēmata, another epic, and another iambic verse.')

¹² Other sources of this type include Ps.-Plu. *Mus.* 1134c-d, and Tz. *Trag. Poes.* 97.

¹³ Cf. Poll. *Onomasticon* 4.103-5.

dancing, the latter bringing the poetry to life. Further in the same passage, he highlights one of the most successful composers of *hyporchēmata*, a poet believed to be Pindar (fr. 107ab),¹⁴ as the one who most persuasively shows that poetry and art need each other (πιθανώτατος ἑαυτοῦ τὸ δεῖσθαι τὴν ἑτέραν τῆς ἑτέρας, 748b):

Πελασγὸν ἵππον ἢ κύνᾳ (6)
 Ἀμυκλαίαν ἀγωνίῳ
 ἐλελιζόμενος ποδὶ μίμεο καμπύλον μέλος διώκων.

Imitate the Pelasgian horse or dog
 from Amyclaea in the contest
 while you whirl with your foot following the curved song.

Here, a specific instruction to dance not only opens the song but more importantly drives it forward.¹⁵ In particular, the chorus is instructed to imitate (μίμεο) as they ‘whirl’ their foot (ἐλελιζόμενος). Ἐλελίζω, ‘to whirl’, is an epic reduplication of ἐλίσσω, a word which Euripides employs frequently in his later plays to indicate a choral circular dance, one tied to Dionysiac cultic practice.¹⁶ Strikingly, these two verbal forms suggest a simultaneous choreography blending the chorus’ mimicry with their circular movement.

Similarly, Athenaeus makes clear that *hyporchēmata* are representational or mimetic dances in which the dance imitates what is expressed in the lyrics of the song which accompanies it:

οἶδε δὲ ὁ ποιητὴς καὶ τὴν πρὸς ᾠδὴν ὄρχησιν· Δημοδόκου γοῦν ἄδοντος (θ 262)
 κοῦροι πρωτῆβαι ὠρχοῦντο· καὶ ἐν τῇ Ὀπλοποιίᾳ δὲ παιδὸς καθαρίζοντος ἄλλοι
 ἐναντίοι μολπῇ τε ὀρχηθμῶ τε ἔσκαιρον (Σ 572). ὑποσημαίνεται δὲ ἐν τούτοις ὁ
 ὑπορχηματικὸς τρόπος, ὃς ἦνθησεν ἐπὶ Ξενοδήμου καὶ Πινδάρου. καὶ ἐστὶν ἡ
 τοιαύτη ὄρχησις μίμησις τῶν ὑπὸ τῆς λέξεως ἐρμηνευομένων πραγμάτων·
 (Athenaeus 1.15d)

The poet also knows of the practice of dancing with song accompaniment. For Demodocus (*Od.* 8.262-4) sang while young boys danced, and in the *Forging of the Arms* a boy played the lyre while others opposite him frisked about to the song and the dance (*Il.* 18.569-72). Here there is an allusion to the style of the hyporcheme, which became popular in the time of Xenodemus and Pindar. This variety of dance is an imitation of acts which can be interpreted by words.

The passage illustrates that the hyporcheme is both a song and a dance in the sense that the dance itself also carries meaning. More importantly, Athenaeus provides two examples from Homer which accentuate the crucial role of the dance in the genre, since these are passages in which the epic poet explicitly differentiates between dancers and singers. In the *Odyssey*, Demodocus is in the centre singing of Ares and Aphrodite while adolescent boys, who are described as ‘experienced in dancing’ (δαήμονες ὀρχηθμοῖο, 8.263), perform a dance around him.¹⁷ The poet gives no indication that the boys also sang, but instead draws attention to their bodies, both at rest and in motion: first the youths stood around the bard (ἀμφὶ δὲ κοῦροι

¹⁴ Authorship is contested, since Plutarch only quotes the text and does not name the author. Schneider (1776, Hyporchem. 6 = 122 Turyn = 96 Bowra = 107ab S-M) proposed Pindar, whereas Reinach 1898 suggested Bacchylides. Most recently, Poltera 2008, 428-435 believes the author to be Simonides.

¹⁵ On διώκω, see Lefkowitz 1991, 12: ‘to “pursue” a song probably means to “follow the music in dance.”’

¹⁶ Csapo 1999-2000, 422. On images of whirling, see Weiss’ discussion in this volume.

¹⁷ Mullen 1982, 13: ‘The seated blind bard in this seems to be a leader with voice and lyre presiding over some kind of elaborate mime.’

/ πρωθῆβαι ἴσταντο, 262-3), and then they beat the divine dance-floor with their feet (πέπληγον δὲ χορὸν θεῖον ποσίν, 264). As they dance, Odysseus marvels at the ‘twinkling of their feet’ (μαρμαρυγὰς...ποδῶν, 265). It is clear that in this passage, which subsequently focuses on Demodocus’ singing, dancers and singers are kept entirely separate. The Linos-song represented on the shield of Achilles in *Iliad* 18 similarly involves a strategic separation of dancers and singers: the maidens and youths there dance and beat the earth around the boy who sings the song as an accompaniment to his music (567-72). A few verses later we find another description of maidens and youths dancing, who are differentiated from the three performers who lead the song and also the dance: one singer (θεῖος ἀοιδός, 604), and two lead dancers (κυβιστητῆρε, 605, who are described as ἐξάρχοντες, 606). It is significant that the word used to identify the two performers as dancers (κυβιστητῆρε) is elsewhere in the *Iliad* used of fish who *leap* above the surface (as in 21.354),¹⁸ an action which will recur in other descriptions of choral dance. In contrast to the two examples of *hyporchēmata* provided by Athenaeus, in which a dancing chorus of youths surrounds a lone singer, the last example from *Iliad* 18 further differentiates among the dancers by introducing two further ‘leaping’ dancers who lead the chorus. This might be perhaps explained in terms of skill: in the *Odyssey*, the entire group of dancers was singled out by virtue of their experience, whereas presumably these two leaping dancers stood out from the rest on account of their ‘leaps’.

Lucian’s description of choirs of boys at Delos likewise describes *hyporchēmata* as choral performances in which dancers and singers are separated, in particular stating that a select few dancers were differentiated from the horde.¹⁹

Ἐν Δήλῳ δὲ γε οὐδὲ αἱ θυσίαι ἄνευ ὀρχήσεως ἀλλὰ σὺν ταύτῃ καὶ μετὰ μουσικῆς ἐγίνοντο. παίδων χοροὶ συνελθόντες ὑπ’ αὐλῶ καὶ κιθάρα οἱ μὲν ἐχόρευον, ὑπὼρχοῦντο δὲ οἱ ἄριστοι προκριθέντες ἐξ αὐτῶν. τὰ γοῦν τοῖς χοροῖς γραφόμενα τοῦτοις ᾄσματα ὑπορχήματα ἐκαλεῖτο καὶ ἐμπέπληστο τῶν τοιούτων ἡ λύρα.

(Lucian *Salt*. 16)

At Delos, even the sacrifices were not without dancing, but were performed with dancing and the aid of music. Choruses of boys came together, and as they sang to the accompaniment of the *aulos* and *kithara*, those who had been selected from among them as the best danced. Indeed, the songs that were written for these choruses were called hyporchemes, and lyric poetry is full of them.

Though we have now lost the lone bard figure that was prominent in the Homeric examples, and around which the chorus danced, this description unmistakably separates two groups from within the chorus itself: the general chorus of boys who ἐχόρευον to the *aulos* and *kithara*, and a select few among them, highlighted as the best, who ὑπὼρχοῦντο. Though both χορεύω and ὀρχέομαι can generally mean ‘to dance’, their opposition here strongly indicates that the latter designates ‘to dance’ (as evident by the strong etymological connection in *orchesthai* emphasising the role of the dance) as opposed to the former’s ‘taking part in a chorus’.²⁰ It is clear that Lucian is describing a stratified chorus, in which the best dancers were separated from the singers, as opposed to the more normal practice in

¹⁸ Edwards 1991, 231.

¹⁹ Mullen 1982, 232, n.11 points out that Callimachus’ *Hymn to Delos* 304-306 similarly implies that ‘the singers and dancers are different people at the Delian performances.’ In that passage, as he describes, ‘the women in chorus strike the ground with their feet while the men “sing in accompaniment” (*hupaeidousi*) the ancient nome of Olen.’ It is worth noting, however, that Mullen also point out that Callimachus may not be describing the same dance at Delos as Lucian.

²⁰ Cf. Bosher 2008-2009, 15-18 who points out a distinction between the two verbs in tragedy.

which the chorus performs both activities of singing and dancing.²¹ Thus far, these sources present the hyporcheme as a type of mimetic dancing that somehow imitates what is expressed in the lyrics, an action which seemed to have required skilled dancers, leading to a general separation between singers and dancers. The dancing group may have been furthermore led by particularly skilled dancers, as in the second example from the *Iliad* and in Lucian's description. Nevertheless it appears that the both song and dance work actively together to create meaning; there is no explicit suggestion of the subordination of one to the other.

However, Athenaeus' further references to the *hyporchēma* in the 14th book of his *Deipnosophistae* muddle our understanding of the nature of the genre. These three references not only provide contradictory information, but they also deviate from the earlier discussion found in book 1 in which the dance was singled out as the essential characteristic. In particular, these examples undermine the general sense of the *hyporchēma* involving mimetic dancing that is separate from singing, and instead describe a genre which emphasises the dance's dependence on the lyrics. This major deviation from the earlier formulation in book 1 is unfortunate, particularly given the importance of book 14 to the study of *mousikē*, which is one of the book's two main topics, and the fact that the book contains one of the most extensive surviving discussions of ancient dance.²² The first of the three references to the *hyporchēma* in Book 14 seems to place, for the first time in the *Deipnosophistae*, special emphasis on the etymology of the word, suggesting that the dance in the *hyporchēma* is *subordinate* to the words accompanying it:

καὶ γὰρ ἐν ὀρχήσει καὶ πορείᾳ καλὸν μὲν εὐσχημοσύνη καὶ κόσμος, αἰσχρὸν δὲ ἄταξία καὶ τὸ φορτικόν. διὰ τοῦτο γὰρ καὶ ἐξ ἀρχῆς συνέταττον οἱ ποιηταὶ τοῖς ἐλευθέροις τὰς ὀρχήσεις καὶ ἐχρῶντο τοῖς σχήμασι σημείοις μόνον τῶν ἁδομένων, τηροῦντες αἰεὶ τὸ εὐγενὲς καὶ ἀνδρῶδες ἐπ' αὐτῶν, ὅθεν καὶ ὑπορχήματα τὰ τοιαῦτα προσηγόρευον. εἰ δέ τις ἀμέτρως διαθεῖη τὴν σχηματοποιίαν καὶ ταῖς ᾠδαῖς ἐπιτυγχάνων μηδὲν λέγοι κατὰ τὴν ὀρχησιν, οὗτος δ' ἦν ἀδόκιμος.

(Athenaeus 14.628d)

For in both dancing and walking, elegance and orderliness are noble, while disorder and vulgarity are shameful. This is why composers from the beginning composed dances for free men, and used the movements as expressions only of that which was sung, consistently maintaining their nobility and manliness: and that explains why such compositions were called *hyporchēmata*. But if someone did choreography unrestrainedly or said something with the songs that did not coordinate with the dances, he was discredited.

In other words he suggests that dances were secondary to — and exclusively in support of — the themes and the words of the poetry. This is one of the earliest indications of dance possessing the specific and subordinate function of illustrating language, rather than expressing that the two work in conjunction with one another. A few passages later he continues to limit the notion of *hyporchēma*, this time linking the hyporchematic to a particular type of dramatic poetry:

τρεῖς δ' εἰσὶ τῆς σκηνικῆς ποιήσεως ὀρχήσεις, τραγική, κωμική, σατυρική. ὁμοίως δὲ καὶ τῆς λυρικῆς ποιήσεως τρεῖς, πυρρίχη, γυμνοπαιδική, ὑπορχηματική... ἡ δὲ γυμνοπαιδικὴ παρεμφερὴς ἐστὶ τῇ τραγικῇ ὀρχήσει, ἥτις ἐμμέλεια καλεῖται· ἐν

²¹ Nagy 1990, 351 cites a similar testimony regarding the Spartan Feast of the Hyacinthia, in which dancers were separated from singing choruses of youths. Cf. Pickard-Cambridge 1988, 255 n. 2.

²² E.g. Ath. 14.615a-e, 616e-623d, 623e-632e.

ἐκατέρᾳ δὲ ὁρᾶται τὸ βαρὺ καὶ σεμνόν. ἡ δ' ὑπορχηματικὴ τῇ κωμικῇ οἰκειοῦται, ἥτις καλεῖται κόρδαξ· παιγνιώδεις δ' εἰσὶν ἀμφοτέραι.

(Athenaeus 14.630c-e)

There are three kinds of dancing associated with dramatic poetry, tragic, comic and satyric; and similarly there are three associated with lyric poetry, the *pyrrhichē*, the *gymnopaideikē* and the *hyporchēmatikē*... The *gymnopaideike* is similar to the tragic dance known as the *emmeleia*; for seriousness and gravity are apparent in both. The *hyporchēmatikē* is related to the comic dance called the *kordax*: both are frivolous.

Finally, Athenaeus supplies a final definition of the hyporchematic, in what may be the most vague formulation of the genre to be found in all the extant ancient testimonies:

ἡ δ' ὑπορχηματικὴ ἐστὶν ἐν ᾗ ᾄδων ὁ χορὸς ὀρχεῖται.

(Athenaeus 14.631c)

The *hyporchēmatikē* is that in which the chorus dances while singing.

These last two passages in particular raise more questions than they provide answers. The fact that the hyporcheme is uniquely associated with the comic dance *kordax* potentially suggests that in the postclassical era the hyporcheme may have been confused and assimilated with pantomime.²³ The last example directly contradicts the picture of a separation of dancers and singers provided by Athenaeus in 1.15d. If anything, these three examples reveal that Athenaeus has not used the term consistently throughout his work.

How are we to explain this wide range of discrepancy in this important source? Recent work on Athenaeus has pointed out the challenges of relying on him as a source on musical matters, given his lack of interest in chronology or even in the evolution of music.²⁴ Other scholars have pointed out the distinct influence of particular philosophical views and concepts, especially those stemming from Plato on the 'proper' form of music and its crucial role in the education of citizen men.²⁵ In a recent analysis of the structure and contents of book 14 of the *Deipnosophistae*, Paola Ceccarelli points out that the book contains some of the most general philosophical reflections on the effects of *mousikē* on the mind and soul found in the entire work, with the result that citations from ancient sources now appear as blurred, and it is unclear who is being cited as an authority, whether it is an ancient source or a figure from Athenaeus' time.²⁶ This analysis of the wider functioning of authority in Athenaeus's work allows us, I would argue, to reassess his description of the hyporcheme, and explain its apparent contradictions, such as the alignment of a lively and mimetic dance with the *kordax*, which ultimately reflects a moralising statement on the place of non-solemn dances that is more in keeping with Plato, who banishes ecstatic dancing from the educational repertoire of citizen men.²⁷ It is also in the fourteenth book that we find one of the most prominent, and contested, examples of the genre, the so-called *hyporchēma* by Pratinas (14.617b-f, PMG fr. 708). Scholarship on this seventeen verse lyric piece has tended predominantly to discuss its performance context as well as the many textual difficulties that

²³ Theophrastus' *Characters* 6 mentions the *kordax* as a 'lewd, grotesque, and shameless dance' in direct connection to the comic chorus. See also Ath. 14.630c-d and Luc. *Salt.* 26.

²⁴ Barker 2000, 433, Naerebout 1997, 191-2. On Athenaeus' citation as 'performance', see Jacob 2004, and also Leven 2010, who discusses the problems with using Athenaeus as a source for the 'New Music' revolution.

²⁵ Cf. Ley 2007, 204. Mirhady 2012, 395: 'The definition of hyporchēma that Athenaeus suggests seems suspiciously like one that a philosopher might device on the basis of etymology... The word is normally used much more widely, even in Athenaeus, to refer to lively and/or mimetic dances both within and outside dramatic productions. So it seems that in Athenaeus we have a sort of philosophical definition doing battle with practical usages of the term.'

²⁶ All this blurring of sources prompts Ceccarelli 2000, 81 to ask: 'whose times are these?'

²⁷ Pl. *Lg.* vii. 815c, cf. Pickard-Cambridge 1988, 246-8, Griffith 2013, 46-47.

it presents.²⁸ The general sense of the complaint in the fragment is that the dance has now become subordinate to the *aulos*, in that the *auletes* no longer accompanied the chorus but vice versa. The fragment is presented in a rather incoherent discussion of the *aulos*, which flits from accounts that belittle the music produced by the pipes (e.g. Melanippides on Athena in 14.616e) to those that offer a description of their usefulness (e.g. Telestes' description in 14.617b). As Pauline LeVen has recently argued, this particular section of Athenaeus' text seems more concerned with illustrating the validity of Aristotle's beliefs regarding the *aulos* through a variety of poetic examples,²⁹ and we may extend this to the entire fourteenth book, which, by presenting such a collection of conflicting testimonies, appears to be a discussion of music ultimately in the service of philosophical debate. These examples do not provide empirical descriptions, and they should not be mistaken as such.

Even if we restrict the evidence, ignoring Athenaeus' 14th book, thus making the *hyporchēma* mean two types of orchestric movements involving song and dance, we must admit the evidence is still fairly unspecific: any choral dance with song might be so designated. How can it be that the hyporcheme's only distinctive characteristic is dance when dance already accompanied most choral songs? In *Poetics* 1447a27 Aristotle points out the mimetic capacity of *all* dancers, who through physically translating rhythms can 'create mimesis of character, sufferings, and actions' (διὰ τῶν σχηματιζομένων ῥυθμῶν μιμοῦνται καὶ ἦθη καὶ πάθη καὶ πράξεις). It comes as no surprise that scholars in the modern period have denounced the term as an unhelpful one, especially when trying to trace its elusive footprints in surviving literature. In a discussion of the character and form of the dithyramb, Wilamowitz declared that the grammarians are to blame for assigning the name *hyporchēmata* and arranging them in special books: it is a bad name because they are all dance songs (*Tanzlieder*).³⁰ However, as we have seen the term existed in Plato's time to designate a particular type of choral *melos*. Furthermore, Wilamowitz's complaint regarding 'bad names' can easily be extended to other lyric genres.³¹ As other scholars have pointed out, ancient categories were not exclusive, and vague and inconsistent use of terms for lyric compositions is the norm, making the reconstruction of ancient conceptions of genre a challenging and frustrating endeavour. It is useful here to note Chris Carey's recent comments on the especially fluid nature of the categories and boundaries relating to lyric genres, in which he reminds us that these labels are worth retaining so long as we do not either apply or reject them too simplistically.³² Nevertheless, this careful review of the available evidence on the *hyporchēma* allows us tentatively to define it as a choral genre that separated the chorus into two visible groups of dancers and singers, as opposed to the normal practice of having the chorus perform both singing and dancing, in order to accommodate a

²⁸ Seaford 1977-1978, Napolitano 2000, D'Alessio 2007, D'Angour 2013, 202.

²⁹ Leven 2010.

³⁰ Wilamowitz-Moellendorf 1907, 76: 'Und nicht einmal das ist dem Dithyrambos ausschliesslich eigen, sondern fand sich auch in anderen Liedern als denen, welche für den Dionysosdienst verfasst waren; die Grammatiker haben sie, weil sie keinen bezeichnenden Namen hatten, als Tanzlieder (ὑπορχήματα) bezeichnet und in besondere Bücher geordnet. Es ist ein schlechter Name; denn Tanzlieder sind sie ja alle.' ('And not even that is unique to the dithyramb, but was also found in other songs than those which were composed for Dionysos' cult; the grammarians have classed them as dance songs (ὑπορχήματα) because they had no better name to classify them with, and arranged them into special books. It is a bad name; for they are all dance songs.')

³¹ Cf. Swift 2010, 22.

³² Carey 2009, 22: 'the boundaries are not fixed but elastic, porous, negotiable and provisional. Literary genres are best seen not as fixed categories but as tendencies, firm enough to allow affinities and influences to be discernible and to generate a set of audience expectations, but sufficiently flexible to allow and even tacitly invite frustration and redefinition of those expectations.'

more mimetic dance.³³ In the hyporcheme, singing and dancing are not entirely disconnected forms, but rather might be better thought of as one end of a spectrum, in which the dynamic between the activities that is typically present in all ancient Greek choral forms is pushed to the point of separation.

THE *HYPORCHĒMA* AND DANCING IN TRAGEDY

The previous section analysed the most important ancient testimonia regarding the hyporcheme. As we saw, one of the examples of the genre that Athenaeus provides was the song by Demodocus in *Od.* 8.264. In his famous commentary on the epic poem, the Byzantine scholar Eustathius echoes Athenaeus' judgement that this dance belongs to the hyporchematic genre (τὸ ὑπορχηματικὸν εἶδος), providing a definition that closely quotes Athenaeus 1.15 on the mimetic aspect of the dance (ἔστι δέ φασιν ἡ τοιαύτη ὄρχησις μίμησις τῶν ὑπὸ τῆς λέξεως ἐρμηνευομένων πραγμάτων).³⁴ However, he lists a further example of this kind of dance: a certain Telestes, an Aeschylean actor who, when he performed in the *Seven Against Thebes*, made the action clear through dancing (ὥστε ἐν τῷ ὀρχεῖσθαι τοὺς ἐπτὰ ἐπὶ Θήβας φανερὰ ποιῆσαι τὰ πράγματα δι' ὀρχήσεως).³⁵ Though Eustathius seems to be quoting another section of the *Deipnosophistae* that does not otherwise mention the *hyporchēma* (1.22a, when Athenaeus quotes Aristocles), the link which he makes between the choral genre and tragedy is nevertheless suggestive, given that tragedy is not only a choral genre but also a deeply mimetic one.

Despite its presence in Plato's list of lyric compositions, there is no single ancient surviving testimony that discusses the *hyporchēma* in direct connection to tragedy. The term is absent in Aristotle's *Poetics*, but this is unsurprising given the inadequate attention that the philosopher gives to choral matters (χορικόν),³⁶ as well as the fact that Aristotle makes no reference to other genre types such as epinician or the paeon, both of which are invoked throughout tragedy.³⁷ Nevertheless, postclassical scholars have claimed to find evidence of the *hyporchēma* in tragedy, as a result of various modern misconceptions regarding the general nature of the tragic choral dance, much of which stems from poor coverage of the tragic chorus by ancient sources like Aristotle. Most prominent among these misunderstandings is the erroneous idea that choral movement was limited to the processions of the entering and departing chorus in the *parodos* and *exodos* of any given play. As a result, scholars, whenever confronted with what appeared to be particularly 'lively' odes throughout the tragic corpus, tended to associate them with the hyporcheme, as evident in the following passage by A. E. Haigh:

Sometimes, however, on the arrival of joyful tidings, even the tragic chorus relaxed its usual gravity, and gave vent to its delight in an ode accompanied by lively and

³³ Lada-Richards 2007, 26 posits a similar definition of the *hyporchēma* that is likewise centred on the separation of singer and dancers, additionally commenting that this is 'at the very threshold of the pantomime genre'.

³⁴ Eust. *ad Od.* 1.296.30.

³⁵ Eust. *ad Od.* 1.296.32. On this Telestes (or Telesis), cf. Pickard Cambridge 1988, 248 n. 6.

³⁶ According to *Poetics* 1452b17-18, the choral part of tragedy consists of only three main choral contributions: *parodoi*, *stasima*, and *kommoi*. See Halliwell 1986, 250 for a discussion of the *Poetics* and its negative impact on modern views of the tragic chorus, and the introduction to this volume.

³⁷ Rutherford 1994-1995, Swift 2010. As Pickard-Cambridge 1988, 256 n. 4 explains, 'the absence of all mention of hyporchēmata by Aristotle in the *Poetics* (especially ch. xii) probably means that he regarded ὑπόρχημα in the strict sense as a species of poetry no less distinct from drama than (for example) the paeon or the hymn.'

ecstatic movements. Such odes were called ‘hyporchēmata’ or ‘dance-songs,’ and were written in rapid and vigorous measures. They are often inserted with striking effect just before the catastrophe of the play, when the chorus, misled by false news, abandon themselves to a feeling of exultation which is speedily to be dashed to the ground.³⁸

Haigh’s comment rests on two important (but incorrect) assumptions about tragic *stasima*: that they were motionless and solemn.³⁹ These assumptions were so widespread that any deviation that scholars detected in the surviving tragic plays tended to be easily explained in direct connection to *hyporchēmata*, the ‘dancing songs’ mentioned by Plato and elaborated upon by Athenaeus. The first notion has mostly been debunked by A. M. Dale’s influential article ‘Stasimon and Hyporcheme’, at least in the Anglophone world.⁴⁰ Dale revealed that scholiasts and postclassical grammarians tended to operate under the false notion that all *stasima* were ‘stationary songs’,⁴¹ and as a result they began to invent other categories for songs containing dance and movement, in particular the ὑπορχηματικόν that was developed by Eucleides and quoted by the Byzantine Tzetzes.⁴²

Whereas Dale’s piece has debunked the strange tendency expressed here of imagining tragic choral odes to be songs without dance, the general idea of the solemnity that was believed to be inherent to tragic odes still persists, and has been a major deterrent in finding true traces of the *hyporchēma* in tragedy. This notion stems from Athenaeus’ association of tragic dancing with the *emmeleia*,⁴³ which is frequently contrasted with the comic *kordax* (1.20e, 14.630e): at 14.631d, for example, he summarises that the *kordax* is ‘low-class’ (φορτικός), whereas the *emmeleia* is ‘serious’ (σπουδαία).⁴⁴ These moralising statements on dance can themselves be traced to Plato’s ideas of dancing as an educative art for citizen men in his discussions of the role of music in moral education (e.g. *Pl. Lg.* 814e-816d). As my discussion above illustrated, it is important to recognise that some of these sources in certain instances may be more concerned with finding examples to support particular philosophical ideologies instead of providing evidence for the historical context of musical genres in antiquity. Modern scholars must be wary when relying on these more philosophical discussions for evidence of actual practice in the ancient world.

A quick survey of extant tragic choral odes confirms that these songs were not always ‘serious’, as this connection with the *emmeleia* might suggest. Even if we exclude the ecstatic and extraordinary odes of the Maenads found in Euripides’ *Bacchae*, many tragic choral songs are full of references to dancing, much of which is celebratory and in no way solemn.⁴⁵ for example, in *Ant.* 148-154 the chorus call for ‘all-night dances’ (χοροῖς παννυχίοις, 152-3) to celebrate the victory of Thebes, and in *HF* 763-797 the chorus turn to

³⁸ Haigh 1896, 357. Haigh (*ibid.*) furthermore outlines that the *hyporchēma* was a particular ‘lively kind of stasimon, in which the dancing was the prominent feature, instead of being subordinate to poetry.’

³⁹ Cf. Smyth 1900, lxxiii who believes that the hyporcheme ‘was impressed into the service of tragedy as a dramatic device for relieving the monotony resulting from the regular recurrence of the stasima, which were necessarily of a certain amplitude and accompanied by the solemn ἐμμέλεια dance.’ Kranz 1933, 114 also describes it as a restrained song.

⁴⁰ Dale 1950. The term ‘hyporchēma’ continues to be applied in Italian scholarship, see Rodighiero 2012, esp. 19-60.

⁴¹ E.g. schol. *E. Phoe.* 202 and Suidas s.v. *stasimon*. On the term *stasimon* and its varying interpretations, cf. West 1990, 21.

⁴² Dale 1968, 210, Tz. *de Trag.* 114-6 (which links ἐμμέλεια with ὑπόρχησις).

⁴³ Cf. Luc. *Salt.* 26, Schol. *Ar. Nu.* 540, Suidas and Hesychius s.v. *emmeleia*, *Pollux* 4. 99.

⁴⁴ Cf. *Ath. epit.* vol. 2,2 page 133 line 29.

⁴⁵ e.g. *A. Eum.* 307, *S. OT* 896, *E. HF* 761-4.

joyous dancing after the death of Lycus, inviting the streams and streets of Thebes to join them (ἀναχορεύσας ἄγυιαι, 783). In fact, choruses throughout extant tragedy frequently express their joy in terms of dancing, either making a reference to their own movement or calling for other choruses to perform the dance, with a majority occurring in Sophocles' earlier plays (*Aj.* 693-718, *Ant.* 1115-1154, *OT* 1086-1109, *Trachiniae* 633-662).⁴⁶ In these cases the choruses either assume an extra-dramatic identity as performers of a ritual dance or project their identity onto other groups of dancers located outside the dramatic space, in phenomena famously described by Albert Henrichs as choral 'self-referentiality' and 'projection', respectively.⁴⁷ It was precisely this self-conscious mentioning and awareness of dance that encouraged earlier scholars to label such moments as hyporchematic.⁴⁸ Two such cases of odes previously assumed to be clear examples of *hyporchēmata* are worth discussing briefly, since they were widely assumed to be as such due to the fact that they contain elaborate and even deictic references to their own performance, suggesting that such a dance may be taking place in the 'here and now' of the choral ode. The first example is the astrophic song sung by the chorus in *Trachiniae* 205-225, in which the chorus respond to Deianira's command to raise the ὀλολυγή at 202-3. Upon closer reading, the song appears to be more of an evocation of a paean given the usage of the genre-term (e.g. ὦ ἰὼ Παϊάν at 221) as well as the appeal to the relevant deities Apollo and Artemis in 209 and 214.⁴⁹ However, the song appears additionally to invoke a particular type of Bacchic dancing in 216-220:

αἶρομαι οὐδ' ἀπόσομαι
τὸν αὐλόν, ὃ τύραννε τᾶς ἐμᾶς φρενός.
ἰδοῦ μ' ἀναταράσσει,
εὐοῖ,
ὁ κισσὸς ἄρτι Βακχίαν
ὑποστρέφων ἄμιλλαν.

I leap up and I will not I reject
the *aulos*, you who rule my mind.
See, it excites me
Euoi
the ivy
whirling me around in the bacchic rush.

Apart from the important references to Dionysus (e.g. the ivy and the use of the adjective 'Bacchic'), the general picture is of dancers in frenzied, and specifically circular, motion. Here, the chorus leaps (αἶρομαι) and whirls (ὑποστρέφων), because they are excited (ἀναταράσσει) by the music of the *aulos*. The deictic ἰδοῦ suggests that they are performing such a dance as they are singing it.⁵⁰ It was precisely this excited Dionysian movement, presumably thought to be incompatible with the Apolline paean,⁵¹ which prompted an ancient scholiast to comment on the apparent singularity of this song:

τὸ γὰρ μελιδάριον οὐκ ἔστι στάσιμον, ἀλλ' ὑπὸ τῆς ἡδονῆς ὀρχοῦνται.
(Schol. to S. *Tr.* 216)

⁴⁶ See Kranz 1933, 213, De Falco 1958, 56-88, Rode 1971: 107, and Burton 1980, 30-31.

⁴⁷ Cf. Henrichs 1994-1995 and Henrichs 1996.

⁴⁸ Henrichs 1994-1995, 59-60, esp. notes 20-24. Other moments include E. *Ba.* 1153-1164.

⁴⁹ Swift 2010, 381. De Falco 1958, 79 counts this along with S. *OT* 1086, and *Aj.* 693 as παιᾶνες ὑπορχηματικοί.

⁵⁰ D'Alessio 2007, 109-10 notes the deictic connection with Pratinas.

⁵¹ Cf. Rutherford 1994-1995, 120.

This little song is not a *stasimon*, but they [the chorus] dance for joy.⁵²

As we established above, the scholiast is operating under the misunderstanding that the tragic chorus did not dance during *stasima*, and so such a ‘lively’ description would strike him as exceptional. However, we find an analogous scene of excited circular dancing in connection with the paean in Euripides’ *Iphigenia at Aulis* 1466-1531, precisely at the moment when Iphigenia bids the chorus to sing a celebratory paean (1468) for her death. Specifically, she instructs the chorus to ‘whirl around’ the altar of Artemis (ἐλίσσεται ἄμφι ναόν / ἄμφι βωμόν Ἄρτεμιν, 1480–84).⁵³ The heroine employs the verb ‘to whirl’ (ἐλίσσω), which is frequently tied to Dionysian cultic practice, as I discussed above. Though here it is not the chorus themselves who utter such a statement, but rather Iphigenia who bids them to do so, nevertheless the scene presents a compelling similarity to the brief song in *Trachiniae*, that is, a paean containing elements of Dionysiac dancing.

Similarly, the second *stasimon* in *Ajax* (693-719), likewise labelled hyporchematic, demonstrates a unique concern with dancing. Here, the chorus, who are wrongly convinced by Ajax’s speech, sing a hymn to the god Pan as the χοροποιός of the gods invoking his help with their own dance.⁵⁴ In particular the first strophe indicates that a lively dance is presently being performed:

ἔφριξ’ ἔρωτι, περιχαρὴς δ’ ἀνεπτάμαν.
ἰὼ ἰὼ Πάν Πάν,
ὦ Πάν Πάν ἀλίπλαγκτε, Κυλ- 695
λανίας χιονοκτύπου
πετραίας ἀπὸ δειράδος φάνηθ’, ὦ
θεῶν χοροποί’ ἄναξ, ὅπως μοι
Μύσια Κνώσι’ ὀρ-
χήματ’ αὐτοδαῆ ξυνὼν ἰάψης. 700
νῦν γὰρ ἐμοὶ μέλει χορεῦσαι.

I thrill with longing, and leap up in my delight!
iō, iō, Pan, Pan!
Pan, Pan, he who wanders over the sea,
appear from the snow-beaten rocky ridge of Cyllene,
lord who creates the dances among the gods,
so that you can be with me and tread the
Mysian and Cnosian measures that you have taught yourself!
Now I intend to dance.

The emphasis on the dance here is obvious: besides invoking Pan as a ‘creator of dances’ the chorus specifically request that he teach them particular types of dances, Mysian and Cnosian, as they declare their intention to dance (701). In addition, the insistent repetition of Pan’s name, coupled with the ‘snow-beaten’ epithet (χιονοκτύπου) produce a beating sound that must have echoed the actual dance.⁵⁵ The energy and vigour found in this choral ode, as evidenced with specific references to dancing and echoes of dancing rhythms, made it an

⁵² Xenis 2010, 99 notes that this scholia is found in Laurentian, Triclinian and Roman manuscripts. Burton 1980, 50: ‘the note in the scholia was prompted by the explicit reference in 216 and 218ff. to the physical movements of a dance (ἀείρομαι and ἀναταράσσει...ἄμιλλαν).

⁵³ Cf. Rutherford 2001, 65.

⁵⁴ For Pan as the god of dancing, see Hom. Hym 19.20-1, Pindar. fr. 99, A. Pers. 448-9. Ar. Thesm. 978). See also Finglass 2011, 344 on Pan’s iconography.

⁵⁵ Stanford 1963, 151: ‘one can almost hear the thud of the dancers’ feet beating out the resonant word.’

attractive candidate to many scholars seeking examples of this new category of lively song. However, despite this self-conscious interest in dancing, we must assume that all *stasima* in tragedy were accompanied by rhythmic movements of some kind, so a direct reference to or even emphasis on dancing, no matter how energetic, is not necessarily a sign of the hyporcheme.

Where in tragedy are we then to find the hyporcheme, which according to Lucian, filled (ἐμπέπληστο) lyric poetry (*Salt.* 16)? And how, if a persistent or singular reference to dancing is not enough? As we saw in the previous section, the surviving ancient references to the hyporcheme stress that it was a very common dance song used for a large range of themes and occasions. It therefore makes sense that some of these *hyporchēmata* would wind their way into the great voracious tragic monster which liked to gobble up all sorts of lyric genres, especially one that had mimetic action at its core. Though there is not a single ancient testimony referring directly to a hyporcheme in tragic drama, we do have only one possible mention of the *hyporchēma* in the entire surviving tragic corpus; a curious instance of the verb ὑπορχεῖσθαι, which is found in Aeschylus' *Choephoroi*:

ἀλλ' ὥς ἂν εἰδῇτ', οὐ γὰρ οἶδ' ὅπῃ τελεῖ,
ὥσπερ ζὺν ἵπποις ἡνιοστροφῶ δρόμου
ἐξωτέρω· φέρουσι γὰρ νικώμενον
φρένες δύσαρκτοι, πρὸς δὲ καρδία φόβος
ᾄδειν ἐτοῖμος ἢ δ' ὑπορχεῖσθαι κότῳ. 1025

But so that you may know — for I do not know how it will end,
Just as a charioteer, I am driving rather off the track.
For my mind is out of control and carries me, who am conquered,
and fear is near my heart,
ready to sing and to dance to the tune of anger.

In this crucial passage, which occurs immediately before the appearance of the Furies, Orestes discusses his madness for the first time through an extended metaphor. Specifically, he describes his *phrenes* as the uncontrollable chariot horses, and narrates that his personified fear is both ready to sing (ᾄδειν) and dance (ὑπορχεῖσθαι). Orestes not only uses loaded choral terms (describing their main activity, song and dance) in order to express conflicted emotions, but he also echoes the chorus' sentiments earlier in the play: at the precise point when Electra finds the lock that was left behind by Orestes on Agamemnon's tomb, the chorus of slave women beg her to reveal her new discovery by also relating that their 'heart dances with fear' (ὀρχεῖται δὲ καρδία φόβῳ, 167). Through this formulation, the chorus transforms a common trope found elsewhere in Greek literature in which the heart (ἦτορ, θυμός, καρδία) is described as leaping in fear (with the verb πάλλω) into a more specific choral formulation, centred on the verb ὀρχέομαι, of the heart dancing or beating with fear.⁵⁶ Orestes, however, takes the usage even further as his personified fear is itself carrying out both the singing and dancing, in what is the very first mention of his madness in the play. Here we find a stronger formulation of the separation that Lucian describes at Delos, of the chorus of boys who ἐχώρευον to the *aulos* and *kithara*, and a subset comprised of the best of them who ὑπώρχουντο. Crucially Orestes here employs the verb 'to sing' (ᾄδειν) rather than two forms of verbs connected to dance, as in Lucian. This lone tragic reference to the *hyporchēma* therefore suggests that singing and dancing are actions that are separated, which

⁵⁶ Cf. Hom. *Il.* 22. 452, A. *Choe.* 410-11, A. *Supp.* 567 and 785, and S. *OT* 153 (though used of φρήν).

would be in accord with some of the ancient testimonies explored in my first section. Though the evidence is scant, it is significant that this lone tragic moment likewise suggests that the *hyporchēma* might involve a strategic disjunction between song and dance rather than their seamless conjunction.

EURIPIDES' *ELECTRA* 860-879

As we have seen, there is not much evidence of the *hyporchēma* in tragedy beyond the incorrect assumption that any self-referential language employed by the tragic chorus automatically indicates vigorous dancing. Dramatic choruses frequently draw attention to their own or another chorus' song, music or dance, as Henrichs established in his studies of choral self-referentiality and projection, and such a practice does not indicate that any special type of dancing is actually taking place on stage. Only Orestes' singular use of ὑπορχεῖσθαι in the very first mention of his madness in Aeschylus' *Choephoroi* intimates that the *hyporchēma* might have involved a separation between song and dance, just as my earlier reading of selected passages from the scant surviving sources on the genre. This possibility, according to which the *hyporchēma* might represent a strategic disjunction between song and dance rather than their seamless conjunction, helps illuminate a brief ode from Euripides' *Electra* (860-879), which as I argue, might offer an even more secure base for the *hyporchēma* in tragedy. The ode occurs at a crucial juncture in the play, at the point immediately following the anticipated death of Aegisthus. This is a song of joy and celebration, like the supposed Sophoclean hyporchemes: as soon as the chorus hear that Aegisthus is dead, they immediately express their happiness through singing and dancing. Uniquely, they invite Electra to accompany their dancing with song (ὑπάειδε), but she immediately refuses, proposing instead to fetch adornments inside with which to crown Orestes. Her refusal not only interrupts and alters the course of the choral song, but also draws attention to the performance of an alternative activity beyond the dancing space. I would like to suggest that this short and lively strophic song, which is strongly imbued with epinician language, imagery, and rhythm, additionally evokes the *hyporchēma* not only in its persistent references to dancing but also in its specific introduction of two distinct types of performances by the chorus and Electra. However, the playwright may be taking to an extreme a separation that is already incipient in this Aeschylean moment: Euripides depicts what might have been a joint performance between Electra and the chorus as a decisive process of separation.

Before analysing the potential hyporchematic connections, we must note that this ode strongly evokes the epinician, a link which has been much remarked in the scholarship.⁵⁷ The chorus not only call this a καλλίνικον ᾠδὴν (865), but they also explicitly compare the murder of Aegisthus to an athletic contest (in 863 'the banks of Alpheus' is a clear reference to the Olympic games). The ode's metre is dactyloepitrite with the alternating dactylic and iambo-trochaic sequences, rhythms that are familiar from Pindar's and Bacchylides' victory songs. The ode furthermore opens with the use of a simile at 860, which is a common epinician trope also found in epinicia such as Pind. *Ol.* 6 and *Nem.* 5.⁵⁸ Scholars have also noted that the specific image of a fawn leaping is also found in Bacchylides 13.84–90.⁵⁹

⁵⁷ Swift 2010, 156-170, Carey 2012, 22-25; Cerbo 2012. Roisman and Luschig 2011, 197 call it an 'epinician in reverse', since 'usually athletes are compared to mythological characters.'

⁵⁸ Swift 2010, 160.

⁵⁹ Cropp 2013, 203. Henrichs 1994-1995, 88 connects it to Dionysus: 'the metaphor of the leaping fawn recurs in one of the choral odes of the *Bakkhai* as an image of maenadic freedom and escape from oppression.'

Finally, the chorus employ one of Pindar's favourite words, *aglaia*, at 861.⁶⁰ Given the rich nexus of athletic imagery woven into the *Oresteia* and into the *Electra* plays,⁶¹ this clear and obvious evocation of the epinician is not surprising. This device of setting up Orestes as hero-athlete is ironically intended to diminish the horror of the matricide precisely by comparing it to an athletic event.

However, to identify the ode as merely epinician in flavour would be incorrect. The ode opens with an explicit indication of vigorous dancing, and a direct invitation to Electra to join their performance:

θῆς ἐς χορόν, ὦ φίλα, ἵχνος, ὡς νεβρὸς οὐράνιον	860
πήδημα κουφίζουσα σὺν ἀγλαΐᾳ.	
νικᾷ στεφαναφόρα κρείσσω τῶν παρ' Ἀλφειοῦ	
ῥεέθροις τελέσας	
κασίγνητος σέθεν· ἀλλ' ὑπάειδε	
καλλίνικον ᾧδαν ἐμῷ χορῷ.	865

Set your feet to the dance, dear friend, as a fawn
nimble leaps to the sky with joy.
Your brother has won, has completed a crown-
contest surpassing those
by Alpheus' streams. Come, sing
a song of glorious victory to accompany my dance.

These direct references to a lively dance performance crucially differs from the epinicia of Pindar and Bacchylides, which as Carey points out, are 'notoriously unforthcoming about the nature of their performance.'⁶² In particular the image of a fawn leaping to the sky, though used in Bacchylides 13, activates other cultural expectations and ideas of dancers leaping. The chorus furthermore lays emphasis on their role as dancers by inviting Electra to sing a song (ὑπάειδε ᾧδαν)⁶³ — though a particular kind, the *kallinikos* — which would accompany their dance (ἐμῷ χορῷ). This invitation creates the unusual possibility that an accompanied performance between Electra and the chorus might take place.

This possibility briefly becomes a reality: in a situation unparalleled in extant drama, the song's addressee interrupts and replies to the chorus' song in 866-72. Instead of the choral antistrophe, Euripides inserts a rather lengthy response by Electra, who, in addressing chorus' invitation to join them in dance, echoes the same epinician flavouring introduced by the women in their strophe; specifically, she will crown the head of her victorious brother (στέψω τ' ἀδελφοῦ κράτα τοῦ νικηφόρου, 872).⁶⁴ However, though she continues the imagery and language of victory of the chorus, she replies in *iambics*, which effectively put a stop to the chorus' song. The effect of this jarring response is multiplied by Electra's suggestion that they all instead go inside the house in order to fetch hair-adornments for Orestes (φέρ', οἷα δὴ ἔχω καὶ δόμοι κεύθουσίν μου / κόμης ἀγάλματ' ἐξενέγκωμεν, φίλαι, 870-1). In including Electra's response, Euripides has not only interrupted choral song, but he has also uniquely created two distinct performances on stage. That he makes Electra, a character

⁶⁰ On *aglaia*, cf. Carey 2012, 23: 'a term much loved by Pindar, who uses the noun and its cognates over fifty times in the extant corpus.'

⁶¹ Swift 2010, 165-169.

⁶² Carey 2012, 24.

⁶³ On ὑπάειδε, see Diggle 1980, 39-40.

⁶⁴ Immediately after this brief ode, Electra continues to address Orestes in epinician terms (ὦ καλλίνικε, 880).

whom Edith Hall calls ‘almost pre-programmed to sing in tragedy’,⁶⁵ *speak* to the chorus and in particular invite them to an activity that does not involve singing and dancing is remarkable: when called to accompany the chorus with her famous singing, the Athenian viewing audience may have expected that such a possibility might actually happen, given her lengthy and at times unusual singing role in all plays which involve her.⁶⁶ Instead of a joint performance depicted between Electra and the chorus, Euripides sketches out two simultaneous but competing activities that are to be carried out by the chorus and Electra, thus staging a certain and irreparable process of separation.

Her reply in iambics fundamentally changes the choral song. Though the women acknowledge her reply and interruption, they ultimately decide to continue dancing without her, while adopting even more self-referential language:

σὺ μέν νυν ἀγάλματ' ἄειρε κρατί· τὸ δ' ἄμέτερον
χωρήσεται Μούσαισι χόρευμα φίλον. 875
νῦν οἱ πάρος ἀμετέρας γαίας τυραννέουσιν φίλοι βασιλῆς
δικαίως, τοὺς ἀδίκους καθελόντες.
ἄλλ' ἔγωγε ξύναυλος βοᾷ χαρᾷ.

You bring adornments, then, for his head; but we
shall dance our dance which is dear to the Muses.
Now shall the former dear rulers of our land be masters in it,
with justice, now they have cast down the unjust.
Come, let us shout with the aulos, joyfully.

The contrast is clear: in 874 their response is formulated in terms of a strong opposition between Electra and themselves (σὺ μέν νυν...τὸ δ' ἄμέτερον), which not only continues to emphasise the disjunction between the two parties, but also further accentuates the role of the chorus as dancers (χωρήσεται Μούσαισι χόρευμα φίλον, 875). The dance is again stressed as the chorus' business, one that is furthermore held in high regard by the Muses, whereas Electra is instructed to go inside and fetch the adornments of victory. This contrast here forces us to think about the staging of this strange moment, and specifically whether Electra at this precise moment enters her hut to look for the crown which she is to place on Orestes' head as the chorus sing their antistrophe. If Electra were to move inside the *skēnē*, would her movements distract from the chorus' song and dance? Equally important, what is the chorus doing while Electra is speaking and interrupting her song? Might it be possible that while Electra utters her addresses to the sun, the women of the chorus go through the movements of the dance to the tune of the lyre or flute while they themselves keep silent? The specifics of the tragic chorus' dance are impossible to reconstruct and understand, given the paucity of surviving evidence on the topic.⁶⁷ The little that there is suggests that during an ode, the

⁶⁵ Hall 2010, 319.

⁶⁶ The dating of Euripides' and Sophocles' *Electra*, and specifically which version came first, continue to plague scholars. Denniston 1939 dated Euripides' version to 413 because of the concern of the Dioscuri about sailing to Sicily in lines 1347- 8 (read as an allusion to the Athenian expedition to Sicily; cf. Thuc. 7.20.2, 7.42.1) as well as their references to Helen's eidolon in Troy while she physically was in Egypt in 1280-3 (Euripides' *Helen* was performed in 412). *Communis opinio* dictates that Sophocles' version is also a late play, based on perceived formal similarities with the *Philoctetes* and *Oedipus at Colonus*.

⁶⁷ The lack of evidence has led to multiple debates by modern scholars regarding the dance that was performed in the ancient Greek theatre, including the prominent disagreement on whether the chorus danced in a circular or rectangular space. See, for example, Wiles 1997, 87-97; Foley 2003, 9-11; Csapo 2008, 280-2; Bosher 2008-2009; and Lech 2009.

chorus moved around the altar during the strophe, promptly changed direction during the antistrophe (literally ‘turning the other way’), and stood still for the epode, perhaps in an imitation of cultic worshippers.⁶⁸ Electra’s alternative suggestion of moving inside at the precise moment of a possible joint performance between protagonist and chorus illuminates the many orchestric possibilities on the fifth century stage. It is remarkable that in this particular case Euripides has effectively separated the chorus and Electra at the precise moment when the prospect of an accompaniment and a collaborative performance between the two is promised. Instead of a joint performance, both parties refuse to join the other and end up performing two separate activities.

The emphasis on such a glaring disjunction between the chorus and Electra, initially highlighted as possible joint performers, might be best explained in terms of a hyporchematic echo. As we saw in the previous sections, it is possible to construct a particular conception of the *hyporchēma* based on the strategic separation of singers and dancers, a notion which is furthermore supported by the only use of *hyporcheisthai* in the *Choephoroi* used in direct contrast to *aidein*. The invitation extended by the chorus for Electra to join their performance is framed in terms of *hypaeide* (864), which in turn is differentiated from their dance (ἐμῶ χορῶ, 865). This suggests that in this epinician-filled ode, Euripides introduces, or rather blends, the prospect of a hyporchematic performance between the two parties, in which the chorus would dance while Electra sings. The possibility of such a hyporchematic operation becomes more striking when we consider the various references to choral dancing throughout the play,⁶⁹ and, in particular, to Electra’s possible participation in them. In the play’s *parodos* (167-212), the chorus ask Electra to join them in a festival to Hera, a request which Electra famously refuses. Though much of the criticism in this *parodos* has been focused on Electra’s ‘self-centred’ character,⁷⁰ critics typically fail to see that the chorus’ invitation — and Electra’s subsequent rejection — to the festival of Hera is formulated in ritual terms: the crucially chorus employ *στείχειν* at 174, which suggests a processional form,⁷¹ whereas Electra’s response at 178 further suggests that she has been invited by the chorus precisely to take up the role of choral leader (οὐδ’ ἰστᾶσα χοροῦς).⁷² Towards the end of the play when Euripides stages Orestes and Electra’s sudden revulsion at the matricide that they have recently committed, Electra’s first worry is also expressed in terms of her future role in the choral dance; specifically she wonders which chorus will take her at 1198-99 (ἰὼ ἰὼ μοι. ποῖ δ’ ἐγώ, τίς ἐξ χορόν, / τίνα γάμον εἶμι).⁷³ The *Electra*, for all its accusations of realism, thus contains several important references to ritual performances and especially to Electra’s role in them. Her refusal to attend Hera’s festival is significant, given the goddess’ role as protector of marriage and the transition from virgin to wife.⁷⁴ Electra’s status as a virgin who is now married is clearly problematic in the framework of these rituals, as is the fact that she is wed to someone who is her social inferior. By birth, she should lead the Argive dances but her ambiguous status means that she has no role in festival, and therefore no way to perform. Euripides’ echo of the *hyporchēma*, if taken to mean a strategic disjunction between dancers and singers, would be an important way to illustrate and further emphasise Electra’s unique but separate situation in his play.

⁶⁸ Ar. *Th.* 953-1000; Schol. E. *Hec* 647; Färber 1936, 14-18; D’Alfonso 1994; Csapo 2008, 280-1.

⁶⁹ The play’s second *stasimon* (432-86), for example, prominently showcases several famous mythic choruses: the Nereids, the Pleiades and Hyades.

⁷⁰ Cf. Cropp 2013, 9-11, Michelini 1987, 187-188.

⁷¹ Cf. Calame 1997, 39-40.

⁷² Cf. Calame 1997, 45-6.

⁷³ Euripides’ *Electra* 1198-99: ἰὼ ἰὼ μοι. ποῖ δ’ ἐγώ, τίς ἐξ χορόν, / τίνα γάμον εἶμι;

⁷⁴ Zeitlin 1970.

This chapter began by showing how difficult it is to make an argument on the nature of *hyporchēmata* based on fragmentary and biased evidence. Even when certain testimonies do elaborate on the nature of this elusive genre, we may often find contradictory definitions, particularly if the quote is found in an ideologically or theoretically charged context. Furthermore, what these few sources do stress is the role of dance in *hyporchēma*, leaving us at a grave disadvantage when attempting to understand its nature and characteristics, since dancing is assumed to be an essential part of all other choral lyric genres. With any other lyric genre it is possible to assemble a case for its presence in tragedy based on imagery, diction, and context, but not so with the *hyporchēma*. Nonetheless this chapter has aimed to show that there are sufficient hints to be found regarding its nature that enable us to reconstruct a meaning of the choral genre involving a separation of singers and dancers. Furthermore, such a definition allows us to look afresh at the practice and representation of dance on the tragic stage. Recent studies on the self-conscious language employed by the chorus has alerted us to the myriad ways in which the chorus foregrounds dance in their odes. Many of these moments had been previously assumed by scholars as direct evidence for the *hyporchēma*, by the simple fact that they mention dance. Though some choruses draw unusual attention to their own dancing in the ‘here and now’ of the tragic performance, they nevertheless contain references to other types of choral lyric, such as paeans and hymns, which crucially also contained dancing. Nevertheless, I believe that a more secure example of the elusive ‘dancing song’ can be found in a brief and unique ode in Euripides’ *Electra*, a song which is interrupted by its own addressee. Electra’s singular *iambic* response in the ode, especially after the chorus had specifically extended her a special invitation to join the performance, creates an irreparable separation between her and the chorus at a moment when a joint performance is expected. As I argue, understanding this moment in light of a hyporchematic echo allows us to reflect on the many times the chorus and Electra are suggested as ritual performers throughout the play, only to have their separation stressed at the end. My discussion of this brief ode furthermore attempts to show that though mired in doubt, a particular reading of the *hyporchēma* involving a separation between singers and dancers may shed light on the orchestric dynamics of the tragic stage, and specifically the varying types of physical movements that are possible between chorus and actors. Scholars of the ancient Greek world frequently discuss the ‘song-culture’ context in which lyric poetry was performed. The *hyporchēma* reminds us that choral lyric crucially involved dance, and therefore that in discussions of choral lyric the term ‘song-and-dance’ culture should be adopted.

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